

Polit. Pamphlet vol 7/1

A

DISCOURSE

OF THE

Contests and Dissensions

BETWEEN THE

NOBLES and the COMMONS

IN

K ATHENS and ROME,

WITH THE

Consequences they had upon both those

STATES.

*— Si tibi vera videtur
Dede manus; & si falsa est accingere contra. Lucret.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for John Nutt near Stationers-Hall. 1701.

711

7-11-58



2017年10月10日

STATES

1911

NOV 1960

A
DISCOURSE
OF THE

CONTESTS and DISSENSIONS

Between the

NOBLES and the COMMONS, &c.

CHAP. I.

TIS agreed that in all Government there is an absolute unlimited Power, which naturally and originally seems to be placed in the whole Body, wherever the Executive Part of it lies. This holds in the Body natural ; For wherever we place the beginning of Motion, whether from the Head, or the Heart, or the Animal Spirits in general, the Body moves and acts by a consent of alls its Parts. This unlimited Power placed fundamentally in the Body of a People, is what the Legislators of all Ages have endeavoured in their several Schemes or Institutions of Government,

A 2

ment, to deposite in such Hands as would preserve the People from Rapine and Oppression within, as well as Violence from without. Most of them seem to agree in this, that it was a Trust too great to be committed to any one Man or Assembly, and therefore they left the Right still in the whole Body, but the Administration or Executive Part, in the hands of *One*, the *Few*, or the *Many*, into which three Powers all independent Bodies of Men seem naturally to divide; for by all I have read of those innumerable and petty Commonwealths in *Italy*, *Greece*, and *Sicily*, as well as the great ones of *Carthage* and *Rome*; it seems to me, that a free People met together, whether by *Compact* or *Family Government*, as soon as they fall into any Acts of Civil Society, do of themselves divide into three Powers. The first is that of some one eminent Spirit, who having signalized his Valour and Fortune in defence of his Country, or by the Practice of Popular Arts at Home, becomes to have great influence on the People, to grow their Leader in warlike Expeditions, and to preside after a sort in their Civil Assemblies: And this is grounded upon the Principles of Nature or common Reason, which in all Difficulties or Dangers, where Prudence or Courage are required, do rather incite us to fly for Council or Assistance to a single Person than a Multitude. The second natural Division of Power, is of such Men who have acquired large Possessions, and consequently Dependances, or Descend from Ancestors who have left them great Inheritances, together with an Hereditary Authority. These easily uniting in Thoughts and Opinions, and acting in Concert, begin to enter upon Measures for securing their Properties, which
are

are best upheld by preparing against Invasions from abroad, and maintaining Peace at Home: This commences a great Council or Senate of Nobles for the weighty Affairs of the Nation. The last Division is of the Mass or Body of the People, whose Part of Power is great and undisputable, whenever they can unite either collectively or by Deputation to exert it. Now the three Forms of Government so generally known in the Schools, differ only by the Civil Administration being placed in the Hands of One or sometimes Two, (as in *Sparta*) who were called *Kings*, or in a Senate, who were called the *Nobles*, or in the People Collective or Representative, who may be called the *Commons*: each of these had frequently the Executive Power in *Greece*, and sometimes in *Rome*: but the Power in the last resort was always meant by Legislators to be held in Balance among all three. And it will be an eternal Rule in Politicks among every free People, that there is a Balance of Power to be carefully held by every State with it self, as well as among several States with each other.

The true meaning of a Balance of Power, either without or within a State, is best conceived by considering what the nature of a Balance is. It supposes three Things, First, the Part which is held, together with the Hand that holds it; and then the two Scales, with whatever is weighed therein. Now consider several States in a Neighbourhood: In order to preserve Peace between these States, it is necessary they should be formed into a Balance, whereof one or more are to be Directors, who are to divide the rest into equal Scales, and upon Occasions remove from one into the other, or else fall with their own Weight.

Weight into the Lightest. So in a State within it self, the Balance must be held by a third Hand ; who is to deal the remaining Power with utmost exactness into the several Scales. Now, it is not necessary that the Power should be equally divided between these three ; For the Balance may be held by the Weakest, who by his Address and Conduct, removing from either Scale, and adding of his own, may keep the Scales duly poised. Such was that of the two Kings of *Sparta*, the Consular Power in *Rome* : that of the Kings of *Media* before the Reign of *Cyrus*, as represented by *Xenophon*, and that of the several limited States in the *Gothick* Institutions.

When the Balance is broke, whether by the Negligence, Folly or Weakness of the Hand that held it, or by mighty Weights fallen into either Scale, the Power will never continue long in equal Division between the two remaining Parties, but (till the Balance is fixed anew) will run entirely into one. This gives the truest account of what is understood in the most antient and approved *Greek* Authors by the Word *Tyranny*, which is not meant for the seizing of the uncontrouled or absolute Power into the Hands of a single Person (as many superficial Men have grossly mistaken) but for the breaking of the Balance by whatever Hand, and leaving the Power wholly in one Scale. For *Tyranny* and *Usurpation* in a State, are by no means confined to any Number, as might easily appear from Examples enough, and because the Point is material, I shall Cite a few to prove it.

The *Romans* having sent to *Athens*, and the *Greek* Cities of *Italy*, for the Copies of the best Laws, chose ten Legislators to put them into form, and during the Exercise of their Office, suspended the Consular Power, leaving the Administration of Affairs in their Hands. These very Men, though chosen for such a Work as the digesting a Body of Laws for the Government of a free State, did immediately usurp Arbitrary Power, ran into all the Forms of it, had their Guards and Spies, after the Practice of the Tyrants of those Ages, affected Kingly State, destroy'd the Nobles, and oppress the People; One of them proceeding so far as to endeavour to force a Lady of great Virtue: The very Crime which gave Occasion to the Expulsion of the Regal Power but sixty years before, as this Attempt did to that of the *Decemviri*.

Dionys.
Halicarn.
lib. 10.

The *Ephori* in *Sparta* were at first only certain Persons deputed by the Kings to judge in Civil Matters, while *They* were employ'd in the Wars. These Men, at several times, usurped the absolute Authority, and were as cruel Tyrants as any in their Ages.

Soon after the unfortunate Expedition into *Sicily*, the *Athenians* chose four hundred Men for Administration of Affairs, who became a Body of Tyrants, and were called in the Language of those Ages, an Oligarchy, or Tyranny of the *Few*; under which hateful Denomination, they were soon after deposed in great Rage by the People.

Thucid.,
lib. 8.

When *Athens* was subdued by *Lyfander*, he appointed thirty Men for the Administration of that City, who immediately fell into the rankest Tyranny: But this was not all; For conceiving their Power not founded.

Xenoph.
de reb.
Grac. 1.

Memorab.
lib. 3.

founded on a Basis large enough, they admitted three thousand into a share of the Government; and thus fortified, became the cruellest Tyranny upon Record. They murdered in cold Blood, great numbers of the best Men, without any Provocation, from the meer Lust of Cruelty, like *Nero* or *Caligula*. This was such a Number of Tyrants together as amounted to near a third Part of the whole City. For *Xenophon* tells us that the City contained about ten thousand Houses, and allowing one Man to every House, who could have any share in the Government (the rest consisting of Women, Children and Servants) and making other obvious Abatements, these Tyrants, if they had been careful to adhere together, might have been a Majority even of the People Collective.

Polyb.
Fragm.
lib. 6.

In the time of the second Punick War, the Balance of Power in *Carthage* was got on the side of the People, and that to a degree, that some Authors reckon the Government to have been then among them a *Dominatio Plebis*, or *Tyranny of the Commons*, which it seems they were at all times apt to fall into, and was at last among the Causes that ruined their State: And the frequent Murders of their Generals, which *Diodorus* tells us was grown to an established Custom among them, may be another Instance that Tyranny is not confined to Numbers.

Lib. 20.

Lib. 15.

I shall mention but one Example more among a great number that might be produced; It is related by the Author last Cited. The Orators of the People at *Argos* (whether you will stile them in modern Phrase, *Great Speakers in the House*, or only in general, Representatives of the People Collective) stirred up the Commons against the Nobles; of whom

whom 1600 were Murder'd at once, and at last, the Orators themselves, because they left off their Accusations, or to speak Intelligibly, because they *withdrew their Impeachments*; having, it seems, raised a Spirit they were not able to lay. And this last Circumstance, as Cases have lately stood, may perhaps be worth remarking.

From what hath been already advanced, several Conclusions may be drawn.

First, That a mixt Government partaking of the known Forms received in the Schools, is by no means of *Gothick* Invention, but has place in Nature and Reason, seems very well to agree with the Sentiments of most Legislators, and to have been follow'd in most States, whether they have appear'd under the name of Monarchies, Aristocracies, or Democracies. For, not to mention the several Republicks of this Composition in *Gaul* and *Germany*, described by *Cæsar* and *Tacitus*; *Polybius* tells us, the best Government is that which consists of three Forms, *Regno, Optimatum, & Populi imperio*. Which may be fairly Translated, the *Kings, Lords and Commons*. Such was that of *Sparta* in its Primitive Institution by *Lycurgus*; who observing the Corruptions and Depravations to which every of these was subject, compounded his Scheme out of all; so that it was made up of *Reges, Seniores, & Populus*: Such also was the State of *Rome*, under its Consuls; And the Author tells us, that the *Romans* fell upon this Model purely by chance, (which I take to have been Nature and common Reason) but the *Spartans* by Thought and Design. And such at *Carthage* was the *summa Reipublica*, or Power in the last Resort; For they had their Kings call'd

B Suffetes,

Suffetes, and a Senate which had the Power of *Nobles*, and the *People* had a share establish'd too.

Secondly, It will follow, That those Reasoners who employ so much of their Zeal, their Wit and their Leisure for upholding the Balance of Power in Christendom, at the same time that by their Practices they are endeavouring to destroy it at home, are not such mighty Patriots, or so much in the true Interests of their Country, as they would affect to be thought, but seem to be employed like a Man who pulls down with his right Hand what he has been Building with his left.

Thirdly, This makes appear the Error of those who conceive, that Power is safer lodged in many Hands than in one. For if those many Hands be made up only of one of the three Divisions before mentioned, 'tis plain from those Examples already produced, and easie to be paralleld in other Ages and Countries, that they are as capable of Enslaving the Nation, and of acting all manner of Tyranny and Oppression as it is possible for a single Person to be; tho' we should suppose their number to be not only of Four or Five Hundred, but above Three Thousand.

Again, it is manifest from what has been said, that in order to preserve the Balance in a mix'd State, the Limits of Power deposited with each Party ought to be ascertained, and generally known. The defect of this is the cause that introduces those strugglings in a State about *Prerogative* and *Liberty*, about Encroachments of the *Few*, upon the Privileges of the *Many*, and of the *Many* upon the Rights

Rights of the *Few*, which ever did and ever will conclude in a Tyranny ; First, either of the *Few*, or the *Many*, but at last infallibly of a single Person. For, which ever of the three Divisions in a State is upon the Scramble for more Power than its own (as one or other of them generally is) unless due care be taken by the other two ; upon every new Question that arises, they will be sure to decide in favour of themselves, talk much of Inherent Right ; they will nourish up a dormant Power, and reserve Privileges in *petto*, to exert upon Occasions, to serve Expedients, and to urge upon Necessities. They will make large Demands, and scanty Concessions, ever coming off considerable Gainers : Thus at length the Balance is broke, and Tyranny let in, from which Door of the three it matters not.

To pretend to a declarative Right upon any occasion whatsoever, is little less than to make use of the whole Power : That is, to declare an opinion to be Law, which has always been contested, or perhaps never started at all before such an incident brought it on the Stage. Not to consent to the Enacting of such a Law, which has no view beside the general Good, unless another Law shall at the same time pass, with no other view but that of advancing the Power of one Party alone ; What is this but to claim a positive Voice as well as a negative ? To pretend that great Changes and Alienations of Property have created new and great dependances, and consequently new additions of Power, as some Reasoners have done, is a most dangerous Tenet : If Dominion must follow Property, let it follow in the same pace : For Changes in Property thro' the Bulk of a Nation make slow March-

es, and its due Power always attends it. To conclude, that whatever attempt is begun by an Assembly, ought to be pursued to the end, without regard to the greatest incidents that may happen to alter the Case; To count it mean, and below the *Dignity of a House* to quit a Prosecution; To resolve upon a Conclusion before it is possible to be apprised of the Premises; To act thus, I say, is to affect not only absolute Power, but Infallibility too. Yet such unaccountable Proceedings as these have Popular Assemblies engaged in, for want of fixing the due Limits of *Power* and *Privilege*.

Great Changes may indeed be made in a Government, yet the Form continue, and the Balance be held; but, large Intervals of Time must pass between every such Innovation, enough to melt down and make it of a Piece with the Constitution. Such we are told were the Proceedings of *Solon*, when he Modelled anew the *Athenian Commonwealth*: And what Convulsions in our own as well as other States have been bred by a neglect of this Rule, is fresh and notorious enough: 'Tis too soon in all conscience to repeat this Error again.

Having shewn that there is a natural Balance of Power in all free States, and how it has been divided sometimes by the People themselves, as in *Rome*, at others by the Institutions of Legislators, as in the several States of *Greece* and *Sicily*: The next thing is to examine what Methods have been taken to break or overthrow this Balance; which every of the three Parties have continually endeavour'd, as opportunities have served; which might appear from the Stories of most Ages and Countries. For, Absolute Power in a particular State, is of the same
nature

nature with universal Monarchy in several States adjoining to each other. So endless and exorbitant are the desires of Men, whether consider'd in their Persons or their States, that they will grasp at all, and can form no Scheme of perfect Happiness with less. Ever since Men have been united into Governments, the Hopes and Endeavours after universal Monarchy have been bandied among them; from the Reign of *Ninus* to this of the *Most Christian King*; In which pursuits Commonwealths have had their share as well as Monarchs: So the *Athenians*, the *Spartans*, the *Thebans* and the *Achaians*, did at several times aim at the universal Monarchy of *Greece*; So the Commonwealths of *Carthage* and *Rome* affected the universal Monarchy of the then known World. In like manner has absolute Power been pursued by the several Parties of each particular State, wherein single Persons have met with most Success, tho' the Endeavours of the *Few* and the *Many* have been frequent enough; But, being neither so uniform in their Designs, nor so direct in their Views, they neither could manage nor maintain the Power they had got; but were ever deceived by the Popularity and Ambition of some single Person. So that it will be always a wrong step in Policy, for the *Nobles* or *Commons* to carry their Endeavours after Power so far, as to overthrow the Balance: And it would be enough to damp their warmth in such Pursuits, if they could once reflect, that in such a Course they will be sure to run upon the very Rock they meant to avoid, which I suppose they would have us think is the Tyranny of a single Person.

Many

Many Examples might be produced of the Endeavours from each of these three Rivals, after absolute Power; But I shall suit my Discourse to the Time I am Writing it, and Relate only such Dissentions between the *Nobles* and *Commons*, with the Consequences of them, in *Greece* and *Rome*, wherein the latter were the Aggressors.

I shall begin with *Greece*, where my Observations shall be confin'd to *Athens*, tho' several Instances might be brought from other States thereof.

C H A P. II.

Of the Dissensions in Athens, between the Few and the Many.

THESEUS is the first who is Recorded with any appearance of Truth to have brought the *Grecians* from a barbarous manner of Life among scattered Villages, into Cities, and to have establish'd the *Popular State* in *Athens*, assigning to himself the Guardianship of the Laws, and chief Command in War. He was forced after some time to leave the *Athenians* to their own measures, upon account of their seditious Temper, which ever continu'd with them till the final Dissolution of their Government by the *Romans*. It seems, the Country about *Attica* was the most Barren of any in *Greece*; thro' which means it happened that the Natives were never expelled by the fury of Invaders, (who thought it not worth a
Con-

Conquest) but continued always *Aborigines*; and therefore retained thro' all Revolutions a tincture of that turbulent Spirit wherewith their Government began. This Institution of *Theseus* appears to have been rather a sort of mixt Monarchy than a popular State, and for ought we know, might continue so during that Series of Kings till the Death of *Codrus*. From this last Prince, *Solon* was said to be descended; who finding the People engaged in two violent Factions, of the Poor and the Rich, and in great confusions thereupon; refusing the Monarchy which was offered him, chose rather to cast the Government after another Model, wherein he made due provision for settling the Balance of Power, chusing a Senate of 400, and disposing the Magistracies and Offices according to Mens Estates; leaving to the Multitude their Votes in Electing, and the Power of judging certain Processes by Appeal. This Council of 400 was Chosen, 100 out of each Tribe, and seems to have been a Body Representative of the People; tho' the People collective reserved a share of Power to themselves. It is a point of History perplexed enough; but thus much is certain, that the Balance of Power was provided for; else *Pyſistratus*, (called by Authors the Tyrant of *Athens*) could never have govern'd so peaceably as he did, * without changing any of *Solon's* Laws. These several Powers, together with that of the *Archon*, or Chief Magistrate, made up the Form of Government in *Athens*, at what time it began to appear upon the Scene of Action and Story.

The first great Man bred up under this Institution was *Miltiades*, who lived about Ninety Years after *Solon*, and is reckon'd to have been the first great Captain.

*Herodot.
lib. 1.

Captain not only of *Athens*, but of all *Greece*. From the time of *Miltiades* to that of *Phocion*, who is look'd upon as the last famous General of *Athens*, are about 130 years; After which they were subdued and insulted by *Alexander's* Captains, and continued under several Revolutions a small truckling State of no Name or Reputation, till they fell with the rest of *Greece* under the Power of the *Romans*.

During this Period from *Miltiades* to *Phocion*, I shall trace the Conduct of the *Athenians*, with relation to their Dissensions between the People and some of their Generals; who at that time by their Power and Credit in the Army, in a Warlike Commonwealth, and often supported by each other, were, with the Magistrates and other Civil Officers, a sort of Counterpoise to the Power of the People, who since the Death of *Solon* had already made great Encroachments. What these Dissentions were, how founded, and what the consequences of them, I shall very briefly and impartially Relate.

I must here premise, that the *Nobles* in *Athens* being not at this time a Corporate Assembly that I can gather; therefore the Resentments of the Commons were usually turned against particular Persons, and by way of Articles or Impeachment. Whereas, the Commons in *Rome*, and some other States, (as will appear in proper Place) tho' they follow'd this Method upon occasion, yet generally pursued the Enlargement of their Power, by more set Quarrels of one entire Assembly against another. However, the Custom of particular Impeachments being not limited to former Ages, any more than that of general Struggles and Dissentions between fix'd Assemblies of Nobles and Commons; And the Ruin of *Greece* having

ving been owing to the former, as that of *Rome* was to the latter ; I shall treat on both expressly ; that those States who are concerned in either (if at least, there be any such now in the World) may by observing the Means and the Issues of former Dissensions, learn whether the Causes are alike in theirs, and if they find them to be so, may consider whether they ought not justly apprehend the same Effects.

To speak of every particular Person impeach'd by the Commons of *Athens*, within the compass designed, would introduce the History of almost every great Man they had among them. I shall therefore take notice only of Six, who living in that Period of Time when *Athens* was at the height of its Glory (as indeed it could not be otherwise while such Hands were at the Helm) tho' impeach'd for high Crimes and Misdemeanors, such as *Bribery, Arbitrary Proceedings, misapplying or imbesling publick Funds, ill Conduct at Sea*, and the like, were honored and lamented by their Country, as the Preservers of it, and have had the Veneration of all Ages since paid justly to their Memories.

Miltiades was one of the *Athenian* Generals against the *Persian* Power, and the famous Victory at *Marathon* was chiefly owing to his Valour and Conduct. Being sent some time after to reduce the Island *Paros*, he mistook a great Fire at distance, for the *Persian* Fleet, and being no ways a Match for them, set Sail for *Athens* ; at his Arrival he was impeach'd by the Commons for Treachery, tho' not able to appear by reason of his Wounds, fined 30000 Crowns, and died in Prison. Tho' the Consequences of this Proceeding upon the Affairs of *Athens*, were

no otherwise than by the untimely Loss of so great and good a Man, yet I could not forbear relating it.

Their next great Man was *Aristides*: Beside the mighty Service he had done his Country in the Wars; he was a Person of the strictest Justice, and best acquainted with the Laws as well as Forms of their Government, so that he was in a manner the Chancellor of *Athens*. This Man upon a slight and false Accusation of *favouring Arbitrary Power*, was banish'd by *Ostracism*; which rendered into modern *English*, would signify that they voted *he should be removed from their Presence and Councils for ever*. But, however, they had the Wit to recal him, and to that Action owed the Preservation of their State by his future Services. For it must be still confessed in behalf of the *Athenian* People, that they never conceived themselves perfectly infallible, nor arrived to the Heights of *modern Assemblies*, to make *Obstinacy* confirm what *sudden Heat and Temerity* began. They thought it not below the Dignity of an Assembly to endeavour at correcting an ill Step; at least to repent, tho' it often fell out too late.

Themistocles was at first a *Commoner* himself. It was he that raised the *Athenians* to their Greatness at Sea, which he thought to be the true and constant Interest of that Commonwealth; and the famous Naval Victory over the *Persians* at *Salamis* was owing to his Conduct. It seems the People observed somewhat of Haughtiness in his Temper and Behavior, and therefore banisht him for five Years; but finding some slight matter of Accusation against him, they sent to seize his Person, and he hardly escaped

escaped to the *Persian* Court ; from whence if the Love of his Country had not surmounted its base Ingratitude to him, he had many Invitations to return at the Head of the *Persian* Fleet, and take a terrible Revenge ; But he rather chose a voluntary Death.

The People of *Athens* Impeached *Pericles* for *Misaplying the Publick Revenues to his own Private Use*. He had been a Person of great Deservings from the Republick, was an *admirable Speaker*, and very Popular, *His Accounts were confused, and he could not give them up* ; therefore meerly to divert that Difficulty, and the Consequences of it, he was forced to engage his Country in the *Peloponnesian War*, the longest that ever was known in *Greece*, and which ended in the utter Ruin of *Athens*.

The same People having resolved to subdue *Sicily*, sent a mighty Fleet under the command of *Nicias*, *Lamachus*, and *Alcibiades* ; the two former, Persons of Age and Experience ; the last a young Man of noble Birth, excellent Education, and a plentiful Fortune. A little before the Fleet set Sail, it seems, one Night, the Stone Images of *Mercury* placed in several parts of the City were all paled in the Face : This Action the *Athenians* interpreted for a Design of destroying the Popular State ; And *Alcibiades* having been formerly noted for the like Frolicks and Excursions, was immediatly accused of this. He, whether Conscious of his Innocence, or assured of the Secrecy, offered to come to his Tryal before he went to his Command ; this the *Athenians* refused ; but as soon as he was got to *Sicily*, they sent for him back, designing to take the Advantage, and Prosecute him in the Absence of his Friends, and of

the Army, where he was very Popular. It seems, he understood the Resentments of a Popular Assembly too well to trust them; and therefore instead of returning, escaped to *Sparta*; where his desires of Revenge prevailing over his Love to his Country, he became its greatest Enemy. Mean while, the *Athenians* before *Sicily*, by the Death of one Commander, and the Superstition, Weakness, and perfect ill Conduct of the other, were utterly destroyed, the whole Fleet taken, a miserable Slaughter made of the Army, whereof hardly one ever returned. Some time after this, *Alcibiades* was recalled upon his Conditions, by the Necessities of the People; and made chief Commander at Sea and Land; but his Lieutenant engaging against his positive Orders, and being beaten by *Lysander*; *Alcibiades* was again disgraced and banished. However, the *Athenians* having lost all Strength and Heart since their Misfortune at *Sicily*, and now deprived of the only Person that was able to recover their Losses, repent of their Rashness, and endeavour in vain for his Restoration; the *Persian* Lieutenant, to whose Protection he fled, making him a Sacrifice to the Resentments of *Lysander* the General of the *Lacedemonians*, who now reduces all the Dominions of the *Athenians*, takes the City, razes their Walls, ruins their Works, and changes the Form of their Government; which though again restored for some time by *Thrasybulus* (as their Walls were rebuilt by *Conon*) yet here we must date the Fall of the *Athenian* Greatness; the Dominion and chief Power in *Greece*, from that Period, to the time of *Alexander* the Great, which was about fifty Years, being divided between the *Spartans* and *Thebans*. Though *Philip*, *Alexander's*
 Father

Father (*the Most Christian King* of that Age) had indeed some time before begun to break in upon the Republicks of Greece, by Conquest or *Bribery*; particularly *dealing large Money among some Popular Orators*, by which he brought many of them, (as the term of Art was then) to *Philippize*.

In the time of *Alexander* and his Captains, the *Athenians* were offered an Opportunity of preserving their Liberty, and being restored to their former State; but the wise Turn they thought to give the Matter, was by an Impeachment and Sacrifice of the Author, to hinder the Success. For, after the Destruction of *Thebes* by *Alexander*; this Prince designing the Conquest of *Athens*, was prevented by *Phocion* the *Athenian* General, then Ambassador from that State; who by his great Wisdom and Skill at Negotiation, diverted *Alexander* from his Design, and restored the *Athenians* to his Favour. The very same Success he had with *Antipater* after *Alexander's* Death, at which time the Government was new regulated by *Solon's* Laws: But *Polyperchon*, in hatred to *Phocion*, having by Order of the young King (whose Governor he was) restored those whom *Phocion* had banished; the Plot succeeded, *Phocion* was accused by Popular Orators, and put to Death.

Thus was the most powerful Commonwealth of all Greece, after great Degeneracies from the Institution of *Solon*, utterly destroyed by that rash, jealous, and inconstant humour of the People, which was never satisfied to see a General either *Victorious* or *Unfortunate*; such ill Judges, as well as Rewarders, are *Popular Assemblies*, of those who best deserve from them.

Now.

Lib. 18.

Now the Circumstance which makes these Examples of more Importance, is, that this very Power of the People in *Athens*, claimed so confidently for an *inherent Right*, and insisted on as the *undoubted Privilege of an Athenian born*, was the rankest Encroachment imaginable, and the grossest Degeneracy from the Form that *Solon* left them. In short, their Government was grown into a *Dominatio plebis*, or *Tyranny of the People*, who by degrees had broke and overthrew the Balance which that Legislator had very well fixed and provided for. This appears not only from what has been already said of that Law-giver; but more manifestly from a Passage in *Diodorus*; who tells us, That *Antipater* one of *Alexander's* Captains, abrogated the Popular Government (in *Athens*) and restored the Power of Suffrages and Magistracy, to such only as were worth two thousand Drachmas; by which means, (says he) that Republick came to be [again] administred by the Laws of *Solon*. By this Quotation, 'tis manifest, that great Author look'd upon *Solon's* Institution, and a Popular Government to be two different Things. And as for this Restoration by *Antipater*, it had neither Consequence nor Continuance worth observing.

I might easily produce many more Examples, but these are sufficient, and it may be worth the Readers time to reflect a little upon the Merits of the Cause, as well as of the Men who had been thus dealt with by their Country. I shall direct him no further than by repeating, that *Aristides* was the most renowned by the People themselves for his exact *Justice and Knowledge in the Law*. That *Themistocles* was a most fortunate Admiral, and had got a mighty Victory over the great King of *Persia's Fleet*; That *Pericles* was

was an *able Minister of State, an excellent Orator, and a Man of Letters*; And lastly, that *Phocion*, besides the Success of his Arms, was also renowned for his *Negotiations abroad, having in an Embassy brought the greatest Monarch of the World at that time, to the Terms of an honourable Peace, by which his Country was preserved.*

I shall conclude my Remarks upon *Athens*, with the Character given us of that People by *Polybius*. Lib. 5. About this time (says he) the *Athenians* were Governed by two Men, quite sunk in their Affairs, had little or no Commerce with the rest of *Greece*, and were become great Reverencers of Crown'd Heads.

For from the time of *Alexander's* Captains, till *Greece* was subdued by the *Romans* (to the latter part of which this Description of *Polybius* falls in) *Athens* never produced one Famous Man either for Councils or Arms, or hardly for Learning. And indeed it was a dark insipid Period through all *Greece*: for except the *Achaian* League under *Aratus* and *Philopæmen*,^{Polyb.} and the endeavours of *Agis* and *Cleomenes* to restore the State of *Sparta*, so frequently harassed by Tyrannies occasioned by the Popular Practices of the *Ephori*, there was very little worth Recording. All which Consequences may perhaps be justly imputed to this Degeneracy of *Athens*.

C H A P. III.

Of the Diffension between the Patricians and Plebeians in Rome, with the Consequences they had upon that State.

HAVING in the foregoing Chapter confined my self to the Proceedings of the Commons only by the Method of *Impeachments* against particular Persons, with the fatal Effects they had upon the State of *Athens*; I shall now treat of the Dissensions at *Rome* between the *People* and the Collective Body of the *Patricians* or *Nobles*. It is a large Subject, but I shall draw it into as narrow a Compass as I can.

Dionys.
Halicarn.

As *Greece* from the most antient Accounts we have of it, was divided into several Kingdoms, so was most part of *Italy* into several petty Commonwealths. And as those Kings in *Greece* are said to have been deposed by their People upon the Score of their Arbitrary Proceedings; so on the contrary, the Commonwealths of *Italy* were all swallowed up, and concluded in the Tyranny of the *Roman* Emperors. However, the Differences between those *Grecian* Monarchies, and *Italian* Republicks, were not very great: For, by the Accounts *Homer* gives us of these *Grecian* Princes who came to the Siege of *Troy*, as well as by several Passages in the *Odysses*; it is manifest,

nifest, that the Power of these Princes in their several States, was much of a size with that of the Kings in *Sparta*, the Archon at *Athens*, the Suffetes at *Carthage*, and the Consuls in *Rome* : So that a limited and divided Power seems to have been the most antient and inherent Principle of both those People in Matters of Government. And such did that of *Rome* continue from the time of *Romulus*, tho' with some interruptions to *Julius Caesar*, when it ended in the Tyranny of a single Person. During which Period, (not many Years longer than from the *Norman Conquest* to our Age) the Commons were growing by degrees into Power and Property, gaining Ground upon the Patricians as it were Inch by Inch, till at last they quite overturned the Balance, leaving all Doors open to the Practices of popular and ambitious Men, who destroyed the Wisest Republick, and enslaved the Noblest People that ever entred upon the Stage. By what Steps and Degrees this was brought to pass, shall be the Subject of my present Enquiry.

While *Rome* was governed by Kings, the Monarchy was altogether Elective. *Romulus* himself, when he had built the City, was declared King by the universal Consent of the People, and by Augury, which was then understood for *Divine Appointment*. Among other Divisions he made of the People, one was into *Patricians* and *Plebeians* : The former were like the Barons of *England* sometime after the Conquest; and the latter are also described to be almost exactly what our Commons were then. For, they were Dependants upon the Patricians, whom they chose for their Patrons and Protectors, to answer for their Appearance, and defend them in any

D

Process :

Process : They also supplied their Patrons with Money in exchange for their Protection. This Custom of *Patronage*, it seems, was very antient, and long practised among the *Greeks*.

Out of these Patricians, *Romulus* chose an hundred to be a *Senate* or *Grand Council*, for Advice and Assistance to him in the Administration. The Senate therefore, originally consisted all of *Nobles*, and were of themselves a *Standing Council*, the *People* being only convoked upon such Occasions as by this Institution of *Romulus* fell into their Cognizance : Those were, to constitute Magistrates, to give their Votes for making Laws, and to advise upon entering on a War. But the two former of these popular Privileges were to be confirmed by Authority of the Senate ; and the last was only permitted at the King's Pleasure. This was the utmost Extent of Power pretended by the *Commons* in the time of *Romulus* ; all the rest being divided between the King and the Senate, the whole agreeing very nearly with the Constitution of *England* for some Centuries after the Conquest.

After a Year's *interregnum* from the Death of *Romulus*, the Senate of their own Authority chose a Successor, and a Stranger, meerly upon the Fame of his Virtue, without asking the Consent of the Commons ; which Custom they likewise observed in the two following Kings. But in the Election of *Tarquinius Priscus* the fifth King, we first hear mentioned that it was done, *Populi impetratâ veniâ*, which indeed was but very reasonable for a free People to expect ; tho' I cannot remember in my little reading, by what Incidents they were brought to advance so great a Step. However it were, this Prince in Gratitude

itude to the People by whose Consent he was chosen, elected a hundred Senators out of the Commons, whose Number with former Additions was now amounted to three hundred.

The People having once discovered their own Strength, did soon take occasion to exert it, and that by very great Degrees. For, at this King's Death (who was murdered by the Sons of a former) being at a loss for a Successor, *Servius Tullius*, a Stranger, and of mean Extraction, was chosen Protector of the Kingdom, by the *People*, without the Consent of the Senate; at which the Nobles being displeased, he wholly applied himself to gratify the Commons, and was by them declared and confirmed no longer Protector but King.

This Prince first introduced the Custom of giving freedom to Servants, so as to become Citizens of equal Privileges with the rest, which very much contributed to encrease the Power of the *People*.

Thus in a very few Years the Commons proceeded so far as to wrest even the Power of choosing a King, entirely out of the Hands of the Nobles; which was so great a Leap, and caused such a Convulsion and Struggle in the State, that the Constitution could not bear it; but Civil Dissensions arose, which immediately were followed by the Tyranny of a single Person, as this was by the utter Subversion of the Regal Government, and by a Settlement upon a new Foundation. For the Nobles spighted at this Indignity done them by the Commons, firmly united in a Body, deposed this Prince by plain force, and chose *Tarquin the Proud*, who running into all the Forms and Methods of Ty-

ranny, after a cruel Reign was expelled by an universal Concurrence of Nobles and People, whom the Miseries of his Reign had reconciled.

When the Consular Government began, the Balance of Power between the Nobles and Plebeians was fixed anew. The two first Consuls were nominated by the Nobles, and confirmed by the Commons; and a Law was enacted that no Person should bear any Magistracy in *Rome*, *injussu Populi*; that is, without *Consent of the Commons*.

In such turbulent Times as these, many of the poorer Citizens had contracted numerous Debts, either to the richer sort among themselves, or to Senators and other Nobles: and the Case of Debtors in *Rome* for the first four * Centuries, was, after the set time for Payment, no Choice but either to pay or be the Creditor's Slave. In this Juncture the Commons quit the City in Mutiny and Discontent, and will not return but upon condition to be acquitted of all their Debts; and moreover, that certain Magistrates be chosen yearly; whose Business it shall be to defend the Commons from Injuries. These are called *Tribunes of the People*, their Persons are held Sacred and Inviolable, and the People bind themselves by Oath never to abrogate the Office. By these Tribunes in process of time, the People were grossly imposed on to serve the Turns and Occasions of revengeful or ambitious Men, and to commit such Exorbitances as could not end, but in the Dissolution of the Government.

*Ab Urbe
conditâ.

These

These Tribunes a year or two after their Institution kindled great Dissensions between the Nobles and the Commons, on the account of *Coriolanus*, a Nobleman, whom the latter had *Impeached*, and the Consequences of whose Impeachment (if I had not confined my self to *Grecian* Examples for that part of my my Subject) had like to have been so fatal to their State. And from this time the Tribunes began a Custom of accusing to the People whatever Noble they pleas'd, several of whom were Banish'd or put to Death in every Age.

At this time the *Romans* were very much engaged in Wars with their Neighbouring States; but upon the least Intervals of Peace, the Quarrels between the Nobles and the Plebeians would revive; and one of the most frequent Subjects of their Differences was the *Conquered Lands*, which the Commons would fain have divided among the Publick; but the Senate could not be brought to give their Consent. For several of the wisest among the Nobles began to apprehend the growing Power of the People; and therefore knowing what an Accession thereof would accrue to them by such an Addition of Property, used all means to prevent it: For this the *Appian* Family was most noted, and thereupon most hated by the Commons. One of them having made a Speech against this Division of Lands, was Impeach'd by the People of High Treason, and a Day appointed for his Tryal; but disdaining to make his Defence, chose rather the usual *Roman* Remedy of killing himself: After whose Death the Commons prevailed, and the Lands were divided among them.

This

Dionys.
Halicar.

This point was no sooner gained, but new Dissensions began: For the Plebeians would fain have a Law Enacted, to lay all Mens Rights and Privileges upon the same level; and to enlarge the Power of every Magistrate within his own Jurisdiction, as much as that of the Consuls. The Tribunes also obtain to have their Number doubled, which before was Five, and the Author tells us, that their Insolence and Power encreased with their Number, and the Seditious were also doubled with it.

By the beginning of the Fourth Century from the Building of *Rome*, the Tribunes proceeded so far in the name of the Commons, as to accuse and fine the Consuls themselves, who represented the Kingly Power. And the Senate observing, how in all Contentions they were forc'd to yield to the Tribunes and People, thought it their wisest course to give way also to Time: Therefore a Decree was made to send Ambassadors to *Athens*, and to the other *Grecian* Commonwealths planted in that part of *Italy*, call'd *Gracia Major*, to make a Collection of the best Laws; out of which and some of their own, a new complete Body of Law was formed, afterwards known by the name of the *Laws of the Twelve Tables*.

To digest these Laws into Order, Ten Men were Chosen, and the Administration of all Affairs left in their Hands; what use they made of it has been already shewn. It was certainly a great Revolution, produc'd entirely by the many unjust Encroachments of the People; and might have wholly changed the Fate of *Rome*, if the Folly and Vice of those who were chiefly concern'd, could have suffered it to take Root.

A few Years after, the Commons made further Advances on the Power of the Nobles; demanding among the rest, that the Consulship, which hitherto had only been disposed to the former, should now lie in common to the Pretensions of any *Roman* whatsoever. This, tho' it failed at present, yet afterward obtained, and was a mighty step to the Ruin of the Commonwealth.

What I have hitherto said of *Rome*, has been chiefly Collected out of that exact and diligent Writer *Dionysius Halicarnassensis*; whose History (thro' the injury of Time) reaches no farther than to the beginning of the fourth Century after the Building of *Rome*. The rest I shall supply from other Authors; tho' I do not think it necessary to deduce this matter any further, so very particularly as I have hitherto done.

To point at what Time the Balance of Power was most equally held between the *Lords* and *Commons* in *Rome*, would perhaps admit a Controversie. *Polybius* Fragm. lib. 6. tells us, that in the second *Punick* War, the *Carthaginians* were declining, because the Balance was got too much on the side of the People; whereas the *Romans* were in their greatest Vigour, by the Power remaining in the Senate; yet this was between Two and Three Hundred Years after the Period *Dionysius* ends with; in which time the Commons had made several further Acquisitions. This however must be granted, that (till about the middle of the Fourth Century) when the Senate appeared resolute at any time upon exerting their Authority, and adhered closely together, they did often carry their point. Besides, it is Dionys. Hal. Plutarch. &c. observed by the best Authors, that in all the Quarrels and Tumults at *Rome*, from the expulsion of the Kings; tho' the People frequently proceeded to rude con-

contumelious Language, and sometimes so far as to pull and hale one another about the *Forum*; yet no Blood was ever drawn in any popular Commotions till the time of the *Gracchi*. However, I am of Opinion, that the Balance had begun many years before to lean to the popular side; But this default was corrected, partly by the Principle just mentioned, of never drawing Blood in a Tumult; partly by the Warlike Genius of the People, which in those Ages was almost perpetually employed; and partly by their great Commanders, who by the Credit they had in their Armies, fell into the Scales as a further counterpoise to the growing Power of the People. Besides, *Polybius*, who liv'd in the time of *Scipio Africanus* the younger, had the same apprehensions of the continual Encroachments made by the Commons; and being a Person of as great Abilities, and as much Sagacity as any of his Age; from observing the Corruptions which he says had already entred into the *Roman* Constitution, did very nearly foretel what would be the Issue of them. His Words are very remarkable, and with little addition may be rendred to this purpose. *That those Abuses and Corruptions which in time destroy a Government, are sown along with the very Seeds of it, and both grow up together. And that as Rust eats away Iron, and Worms devour Wood, and both are a sort of Plagues born and bred along with the substance they destroy; so with every Form and Scheme of Government that Man can invent, some Vice or Corruption creeps in with the very Institution, which grows up along with, and at last destroys it.* The same Author in another place, ventures so far as to guess at the particular Fate which would attend the *Roman* Government. He says, its Ruin would arise from popular Tumults, Which

Lib. 5.

Fragm.
lib. 6.

which would introduce a *Dominatio Plebis*, or Tyranny of the People; wherein 'tis certain he had reason; and therefore might have adventured to pursue his conjectures so far, as to the Consequences of a popular Tyranny, which as perpetual Experience teaches, never fails to be followed by the Arbitrary Government of a single Person.

About the middle of the Fourth Century from the Building of *Rome*, it was declared lawful of *Nobles* and *Plebeians* to intermarry; which Custom among many other States, has proved the most effectual means to ruin the former, and raise the latter.

And now the greatest Employments in the State were one after another, by Laws forceably Enacted by the *Commons*, made free to the People; the *Consulship* it self, the Office of *Censor*, that of the *Questors*, or *Commissioners of the Treasury*, the Office of *Prator*, or Chief Justice, the *Priesthood*, and even that of *Dictator*. The Senate after long Opposition, yielding meerly for present quiet to the continual urging Clamors of the *Commons*, and of the *Tribunes* their Advocates. A Law was likewise Enacted, that the *Plebiscita*, or *A Vote of the House of Commons*, should be of universal Obligation; nay in time the method of Enacting Laws was wholly inverted: For whereas the Senate used of old to confirm the *Plebiscita*; the People did at last as they pleased, confirm or disanul the *Senatusconsulta*. Dionys.
Hal. l. 3.

Appius Claudius brought in a Custom of admitting to the Senate the Sons of Freed Men, or of such who

E had

had once been Slaves ; by which, and succeeding alterations of the like nature, that great Council degenerated into a most corrupt and factious Body of Men, divided against it self; and its Authority became despis'd.

The Century and half following, to the end of the third *Punick* War by the entire destruction of *Carthage*, was a very busie Period at *Rome*: The Intervals between every War being so short, that the *Tribunes* and *People* had hardly Leisure or Breath to engage in Domestick Dissensions; However, the little time they could spare, was generally employed the same way. So *Terentius Leo*, a *Tribune*, is recorded to have basely prostituted the Privileges of a *Roman* Citizen, in perfect spight to the *Nobles*. So the great *African Scipio* and his Brother, after all their mighty Services were Impeached by an ungrateful *Commons*.

However, the Warlike Genius of the People, and continual Employment they had for it, served to divert this Humor from running into a Head, till the Age of the *Gracchi*.

These Persons entring the Scene in the time of a full Peace, fell violently upon advancing the Power of the People, by reducing into practice all those Encroachments which they had been so many years a gaining. There were at that time certain *Conquered Lands*, to be divided, beside a great private *Estate* left by a *King*. These the *Tribunes*, by procurement of the elder *Gracchus*, declar'd by their Legislative
Au-

Authority, were not to be disposed of by the *Nobles*, but by the *Commons* only. The younger Brother pursued the same design; and besides, obtained a Law, that all *Italians* should vote at Elections, as well as the Citizens of *Rome*: in short, the whole Endeavours of them both perpetually turned upon retrenching the *Nobles* Authority in all things, but especially in the matter of *Judicature*. And tho' they both lost their Lives in those pursuits, yet they traced out such ways as were afterwards followed by *Marius*, *Sylla*, *Pompey*, and *Cæsar*, to the Ruin of the *Roman* freedom and greatness.

For, in the time of *Marius Saturninus*, a Tribune procur'd a Law that the Senate should be bound by Oath to agree to whatever the People would Enact: And *Marius* himself, while he was in that Office of Tribune is recorded to have with great Industry used all Endeavours for depressing the *Nobles*, and raising the People; particularly for cramping the former in their *Power of Judicature*, which was *their most ancient and inherent Right*.

Sylla, by the same measures became perfect Tyrant of *Rome*; He added Three Hundred Commons to the Senate, which perplexed the Power of the whole Order, and rendred it ineffectual; then flinging off the Mask, he abolished the Office of Tribune, as being only a Scaffold to Tyranny, whereof he had no further use.

As to *Pompey* and *Cæsar*, *Plutarch* tells us, that their union for pulling down the *Nobles*, (by their credit with the People) was the cause of the Civil War, which ended in the Tyranny of the latter; both of them in their Consulships having used all endeavours and occasions for sinking the Authority of the *Patricians*, and giving way to all Encroachments of the People, wherein they expected best to find their own Accounts.

From this deduction of popular Encroachments in *Rome*, the Reader will easily judge how much the Balance was fallen upon that side. Indeed by this time the very Foundation was removed, and it was a moral impossibility that the Republick could subsist any longer. For the Commons having usurped the Offices of the State, and trampled on the Senate, there was no Government left but a *dominatio Plebis*: Let us therefore examine how they proceeded in this conjuncture.

I think it is an universal Truth, that the People are much more dexterous at pulling down and setting up, than at preserving what is fixt; And they are not fonder of seizing more than their own, than they are of delivering it up again to the *worst Bidder*, with their own into the bargain. For altho' in their corrupt Notions of Divine Worship, they are apt to multiply their Gods; yet their Earthly Devotion is seldom paid to above one Idol at a time, of their own Creation; whose *Oar* they pull with less murmuring and much more Skill than when they *share the Lading*, or even *hold the Helm*.

The

The several Provinces of the *Roman* Empire were now Govern'd by the great Men of their State; those upon the Frontiers with powerful Armies, either for Conquest or Defence. These Governors upon any designs of Revenge or Ambition, were sure to meet with a divided Power at home, and therefore bent all their Thoughts and Applications to close in with the People, who were now by many degrees the stronger Party. Two of the greatest Spirits that *Rome* ever produced, happen'd to live at the same time, and to be engaged in the same Pursuit; and this at a juncture the most dangerous for such a Contest. These were *Pompey* and *Cæsar*, two Stars of such a Magnitude, that their *Conjunction* was as likely to be Fatal as their *Opposition*.

The *Tribunes* and People having now Subdued all Competitors, began the last game of a prevalent Populace, which is that of chusing themselves a *Master*; while the Nobles foresaw, and used all endeavours left them, to prevent it. The People at first made *Pompey* their Admiral with full power over all the *Mediterranean*; soon after Captain General of all the *Roman* Forces, and Governor of *Asia*. *Pompey* on the other side restored the Office of *Tribune*, which *Sylla* had put down; and in his Consulship procur'd a Law for *examintng into the Mis-carriages of Men in Office or Command for Twenty Years past*. Many other Examples of *Pompey's* Popularity were left us on Record, who was a perfect Favorite of the People, and design'd to be more; but his pretensions grew stale, for want of a timely opportunity of introducing them upon the Stage.

For

De bello
civili, l. 1.

For *Cæsar*, with his Legions in *Gaul*, was a perpetual Check upon his Designs; and in the Arts of pleasing the People, did soon after get many Lengths beyond him. For he tells us himself that the Senate by a bold Effort having made some severe Decrees against his Proceedings, and against the Tribunes; these all left the City, and went over to his Party, and consequently along with them, the Affections and Interests of the People; which is further manifest from the Accounts he gives us of the Citizens in several Towns, mutining against their Commanders, and delivering both to his Devotion. Besides, *Cæsar's* publick and avowed Pretensions for beginning the Civil-War, were to restore the Tribunes and the *People* oppressed (as he pretended) by the *Nobles*.

This forced *Pompey* against his Inclinations, upon the Necessity of changing sides, for fear of being forsaken by both; and of closing in with the Senate and chief Magistrates, by whom he was chosen General against *Cæsar*.

Thus at length, the *Senate* (at least the Primitive part of them, the *Nobles*) under *Pompey*, and the *Commons* under *Cæsar*, came to a final Decision of the long Quarrels between them. For, I think, the Ambition of private Men, did by no means begin or occasion this War; though Civil Dissensions never fail of introducing and spiriting the Ambition of private Men; who thus become indeed the great Instruments for deciding such Quarrels, and at last are sure to seize on the Prize. But no Man that sees

sees a Flock of Vultures hovering over two Armies
 just ready to engage, can justly charge the Blood
 drawn in the Battle to them ; though the Carcasses
 fall to their share. For, while the Balance of Power
 is equally held, the Ambition of private Men whe-
 ther Orators or great Commanders, gives neither
 Danger nor Fear, nor can possibly enslave their
 Country ; but That once broken, the divided Par-
 ties are forced to unite each to its Head, under
 whose Conduct or Fortune one side is at first Victo-
 rious, and at last both are Slaves. And to put it
 past dispute, that this entire Subversion of the Ro-
 man Liberty and Constitution, was altogether owing
 to those Measures which had broke the Balance be-
 tween the *Patricians* and *Plebeians*, whereof the Am-
 bition of particular Men was but an Effect and Con-
 sequence ; we need only consider, that when the un-
 corrupted Part of the Senate, had by the Death of
Cæsar made one great Effort to restore their former
 State and Liberty ; the Success did not answer their
 hopes, but that whole Assembly was so sunk in its
 Authority, that those Patriots were forced to fly,
 and give way to the Madness of the People ; who
 by their own Dispositions stirred up with the Ha-
 rangues of their Orators, were now wholly bent up-
 on Single and Despotick Slavery. Else, how could
 such a Profligate as *Antony*, or a Boy of eighteen, like
Octavius, ever dare to dream of giving the Law to
 such an Empire and People ? wherein the latter suc-
 ceeded, and entailed the vilest Tyranny that Hea-
 ven in its Anger ever inflicted on a Corrupt and
 Poison'd People. And this, with so little Appearance
 at *Cæsar's* Death, that when *Cicero* wrote to *Bru-*
tus,

tus, how he had prevailed by his Credit with *Octavius*, to promise him (*Brutus*) Pardon and Security for his Person; that Great *Roman* received the Notice with the utmost Indignity, and returned *Cicero* an Answer (yet upon Record) full of the highest Resentment and Contempt for such an Offer, and from such a Hand.

Here ended all Shew or Shadow of Liberty in *Rome*. Here was the Repository of all the wise Contentions and Struggles for Power, between the Nobles and Commons, lapt up safely in the Bosom of a *Nero* and a *Caligula*, a *Tiberius* and a *Domitian*.

Let us now see from this Deduction of particular Impeachments, and general Dissensions in *Greece* and *Rome*, what Conclusions may naturally be formed for Instruction of any other State, that may haply upon many Points labour under the like Circumstances.

C H A P. IV.

U Pon the Subject of *Impeachments* we may observe that the Custom of accusing the *Nobles* to the *People*, either by themselves or their Orators (now stiled *An Impeachment in the Name of the Commons*) has been very antient both in *Greece* and *Rome*, as well as *Carthage*; and therefore may seem to be the inherent Right of a free People; nay perhaps it is really so; But then, it is to be considered, First, that this Custom was peculiar to Republicks, or such States where the Administration was principally in the Hands of the Commons, and ever raged more or less according to their Encroachments upon absolute Power; having been always lookt upon by the wisest Men, and best Authors of those times, as an Effect of Licentiousness, and not of Liberty; a Distinction which no Multitude either *Represented* or *Collective*, has been at any time very Nice in observing. However, perhaps this Custom in a Popular State, of Impeaching particular Men, may seem to be nothing else but the Peoples chusing, upon Occasion, to exercise their own Jurisdiction in Person, as if a King of *England* should sit as Chief Justice in his Court of *King's Bench*, which they say, in former times, he sometimes did. But in *Sparta*, which was called a kingly Government, though the People were perfectly free, yet because the Administration was in the two Kings, and the *Ephori* (with the Assistance
F of

of the Senate) we read of no Impeachments by the People, nor was the Process against great Men, either upon account of Ambition or ill Conduct, though it reacht sometimes to Kings themselves, ever formed that way, as I can recollect: but only past through those Hands where the Administration lay. So likewise during the Regal Government in *Rome*, though it was instituted a mixt Monarchy, and the People made great Advances in Power; yet I do not remember to have read of one Impeachment from the Commons against a Patrician, till the Consular State began, and the People had made great Encroachments upon the Administration.

Another thing to be considered is, That, allowing this Right of Impeaching to be as inherent as they please: Yet, if the Commons have been perpetually mistaken in the Merits of the Causes and the Persons, as well as in the Consequences of such Impeachments upon the Peace of the State; one cannot conclude less, than that the Commons in *Greece* and *Rome*, (whatever they may be in other States) were by no means qualified either as Prosecutors or Judges in such matters; and therefore, that it would have been prudent, to have reserved these Privileges dormant, never to be produced; but upon very great and urging Occasions, where the Stage is in apparent danger, the universal Body of the People in Clamours against the Administration, and no other Remedy in view. But for a few Popular Orators or Tribunes upon the Score of *Personal Picques*; or to employ the Pride they conceive in seeing themselves at the Head of a Party; Or as a Method for Advancement: Or moved by certain powerful Arguments

guments that could make Demosthenes Philippize ; For such Men, I say, when the State would of it self gladly be quiet, and has besides Affairs of the last Importance upon the Anvil, to Impeach Miltiades after a great Naval Victory for not pursuing the Persian Fleet. To Impeach Aristides, the Person most versed among them in the Knowledge and Practice of their Laws, for a blind suspicion of his acting in an Arbitrary way; (that is, as they expounded it, not in Concert with the People) To Impeach Pericles, after all his Services, for a few Paultry Accounts; Or to Impeach Phocion, who had been guilty of no other Crime but negotiating a Treaty for the Peace and Security of his Country: what could the Continuance of such Proceedings end in, but the utter Discouragements of all virtuous Actions and Persons, and consequently in the Ruin of a State? Therefore the Historians of those Ages seldom fail to set this Matter in all its Lights; leaving us the highest and most honorable Ideas of those Persons, who suffered by the Persecution of the People, together with the fatal Consequences they had, and how the Persecutors seldom failed to repent when it was too late.

These Impeachments perpetually falling upon many of the best Men both in *Greece* and *Rome*, are a Cloud of Witnesses, and Examples enough to discourage Men of Virtue and Abilities from engaging in the Service of the Publick; and help on t'other side, to introduce the Ambitious, the Covetous, the Superficial, and the ill-designing; who are as apt to be Bold, and Forward, and Meddling, as the former are to be Cautious, and Modest, and Reserved. This was so well known in *Greece*, that an Eager-

ness after Employments in the State, was lookt upon by wise Men, as the worst Title one could set up; and made *Plato* say; *That if all Men were as good as they ought, the Quarrel in a Commonwealth would be, not as it is now, who should be Ministers of State, but who should not be so.* And *Socrates* is introduced by *Xenophon* severely chiding a Friend of his for not entering into the Publick Service, when he was every way qualified for it. Such a Backwardness there was at that time among good Men to engage with an usurping People, and a Set of *pragmatical ambitious Orators*. And *Diodorus* tells us, that when the *Petition* was erected at *Syracuse*, in imitation of the *Ostracism* at *Athens*, it was so notoriously levelled against all who had either Birth or Merit to recommend them, that whoever had either, withdrew for Fear, and would have no Concern in Publick Affairs. So that the People themselves were forced to abrogate it for fear of bringing all things into Confusion.

Lib. 3.
Memorab.

Lib. II.

There is one thing more to be observed, wherein all the Popular Impeachments in *Greece* and *Rome*, seem to have agreed; and that was, a Notion they had of being concerned in *Point of Honour* to condemn whatever Person they Impeached: however frivolous the Articles were upon which they began, or however weak the Surmises whereon they were to proceed in their Proofs. For, to conceive, that the Body of the People could be mistaken, was an Indignity not to be imagined, till the Consequences had convinced them when it was past Remedy. And I look upon this as a Fate to which all Popular Accusations are Subject; though I should think that the saying, *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*, ought to be understood

derstood of the Universal Bent and Current of a People, not of the *bare Majority* of a few Representatives ; which is often procured by *little Arts*, and great Industry and Application , wherein those who engage in the Pursuits of Malice and Revenge, are much more Sedulous than such as would prevent them.

From what has been deduced of the *Dissensions* in *Rome*, between the two Bodies of Patricians and Plebeians , several Reflections may be made.

First, That when the Balance of Power is duly fixed in a State, nothing is more dangerous or unwise than to give way to the *first Steps* of Popular Encroachments ; which is usually done either in hopes of procuring Ease and Quiet from some vexatious Clamor, or else *made Merchandise, and meerly Bought and Sold*. This is, breaking into a Constitution to serve a present Expedient, or supply a present Exigency : The Remedy of an Emprick, to stifle the present Pain, but with certain Prospect of sudden and terrible Returns. When a Child grows easie and content by being humoured ; and when a Lover becomes satisfied by small Compliances, without further Pursuits ; then expect to find Popular Assemblies content with small Concessions. If there could one single Example be brought from the whole Compass of History, of any one Popular Assembly, who after beginning to contend for Power, ever sat down quietly with a certain Share. Or, if one Instance could be produced of a Popular Assembly, that ever knew, or proposed, or declared what share

Share of Power was their due ; then might there be some hopes, that it were a Matter to be adjusted, by Reasonings, by Conferences, or Debates : But since all that is manifestly otherwise, I see no Course to be taken in a settled State, but a steady constant Resolution in those to whom the rest of the Balance is entrusted, never to give way so far to Popular Clamours, as to make the least Breach in the Constitution, through which a Million of Abuses and Encroachments will certainly in time force their way.

Again, from this Deduction, it will not be difficult to gather and assign certain Marks of Popular Encroachments; by observing of which, those who hold the Balance in a State, may judge of the Degrees, and by early Remedies and Application, put a Stop to the fatal Consequences that would otherwise ensue. What those Marks are, has been at large deduced, and need not be here repeated.

Another Consequence is this : That (with all Respect for popular Assemblies be it spoke) it is hard to recollect one Folly, Infirmary or Vice, to which a single Man is subjected, and from which a Body of Commons either collective or represented can be wholly exempt. For, besides that they are composed of Men with all their Infirmities about them ; they have also the ill Fortune to be generally led and influenced by the very worst among themselves ; I mean, *Popular Orators, Tribunes*, or as they are now stiled, *Great Speakers, Leading Men*, and the like. From whence it comes to pass, that

that in their Results we have sometimes found the same Spirit of Cruelty and Revenge, of Malice and Pride; the same Blindness and Obstinacy, and Unsteadiness; the same ungovernable Rage and Anger; the same Injustice, Sophistry, and Fraud, that ever lodged in the Breast of any Individual.

Again, In all Free States the Evil to be avoided is *Tyranny*: That is to say, the *Summa Imperii*, or unlimited Power solely in the Hands of the *One*, the *Few*, or the *Many*. Now, we have shewn, that although most Revolutions of Government in *Greece* and *Rome* began with the Tyranny of the People, yet they generally concluded in that of a Single Person; so that an usurping Populace is its own *Dupe*; a meer Underworker, and a Purchaser in Trust for some Single Tyrant, whose State and Power they advance to their own Ruin, with as blind an Instinct, as those Worms that die with weaving magnificent Habits for Beings of a Superior Nature to their own.

C H A P. V.

SOME Reflections upon the late publick Proceedings among us, and that variety of Factions into which we are still so intricately engaged, gave Occasion to this Discourse. I am not conscious that I have forced one Example, or put it into any other Light than it appeared to me, long before I had Thoughts of producing it.

I cannot conclude without adding some particular Remarks upon the present Posture of Affairs and Dispositions in this Kingdom.

The Fate of Empire is grown a common place : That all Forms of Government having been instituted by Men, must be mortal like their Authors, and have their Periods of Duration limited as well as those of private Persons, this is a Truth of vulgar Knowledge and Observation : But there are few who turn their Thoughts to examine how those Diseases in a State are bred, that hasten its End ; which would however be a very useful Enquiry. For tho' we cannot prolong the Period of a Commonwealth beyond the Decree of Heaven, or the Date of its Nature, any more than Human Life beyond the Strength of the Seminal Virtue ; yet, we may manage a sickly Constitution, and preserve a strong one ; we may watch and prevent Accidents ; we may turn off a great Blow from without, and purge away

way an ill Humour that is lurking within : And by these, and other such Methods, render a State long-lived, tho' not immortal. Yet some Physicians have thought, that if it were practicable to keep the several Humours of the Body, in an exact equal Balance of each with its opposite, it might be immortal ; and so perhaps would a political Body, if the Balance of Power could be always held exactly even. But I doubt, this is as impossible in the Practice as the other.

It has an Appearance of Fatality, and that the Period of a State approaches, when a Concurrence of many Circumstances both within and without, unite toward its Ruin ; while the whole Body of the People are either stupidly negligent, or else giving in with all their Might, to those very Practices that are working their Destruction. To see whole Bodies of Men breaking a Constitution by the very same Errors that so many have been broke before. To observe opposite Parties, who can agree in nothing else, yet firmly united in such Measures as must certainly ruin their Country. In short, to be encompass'd with the greatest Dangers from without, to be torn by many virulent Factions within ; then to be secure and senseless under all this, and to make it the very least of our Concern. These and some others that might be named, appear to me to be the most likely Symptoms in a State, of a *Sickness unto Death*.

*Quod procul à nobis flectat Fortuna gubernans :
Et ratio potius, quam res persuadeat ipsa. Luct.*

G

There

There are some Conjunctions wherein the Death or Dissolution of Government is more lamentable in its Consequences than it would be in others. And, I think, a State can never arrive to its Period in a more deplorable *Crisis*, than at a time when some *Prince in the Neighbourhood*, of vast Power and Ambition lies hovering like a Vulture to devour, or at least, dismember its dying Carcass; by which means it becomes only a Province or Acquisition to some mighty Monarchy, without hopes of a Resurrection.

I know very well, there is a Set of sanguine Tempers, who deride and ridicule in the Number of Fopperies all such apprehensions as these. They have it ready in their Mouths, that the People of *England* are of a Genius and Temper, never to admit Slavery among them; and they are furnish'd with a great many common places upon that Subject. But, it seems to me, that such Discourfers do reason upon short Views, and a very moderate compass of Thought. For, I think it a great Error to count upon the Genius of a Nation as a standing Argument in all Ages; since there is hardly a Spot of Ground in *Europe*, where the Inhabitants have not frequently and entirely changed their Temper and Genius. Neither can I see any Reason why the Genius of a Nation should be more fixed in the Point of Government, than in their Morals, their Learning, their Religion, their common Humour and Conversation, their Diet, and their Complexion; which do all notoriously vary almost in every Age,
and

and may every one of them have great Effects upon Mens Notions of Government.

Since the *Norman Conquest*, the Balance of Power in *England* has often varied, and sometimes been wholly overturned; the Part which the Commons had in it, *that most disputed Point in its Original, Progress and Extent*, was, by their own Confessions, but a very inconsiderable share. Generally speaking, they have been gaining ever since, tho' with frequent Interruptions, and slow Progress. The abolishing of *Villanage*, together with the Custom introduced (or permitted) among the Nobles of selling their Lands in the Reign of *Henry the Seventh*, was a mighty Addition to the Power of the Commons; yet I think a much greater happened in the time of his Successor, at the Dissolution of the Abbies. For this turned the *Clergy* wholly out of the Scale, who had so long filled it; and placed the *Commons* in their stead; who in a few Years became possessed of vast Quantities of those and other Lands, by Grant or Purchase. About the middle of *Queen Elizabeth's* Reign, I take the Power between the Nobles and the Commons to have been in more equal Balance, than it was ever before or since. But then, or soon after, arose a Faction in *England*, which under the Name of *Puritan*, began to grow Popular, by molding up their new Schemes of Religion with Republican Principles in Government; and gaining upon the *Prerogative*, as well as the Nobles, under several Denominations for the space of about sixty Years, did at last overthrow the Constitution, and according

ding to the usual course of such Revolutions, did introduce a Tyranny, first of the People, and then of a single Person.

In a short time after, the old Government was revived. But the Progress of Affairs for almost Forty Years under the Reigns of two weak Princes, is a Subject of a very different Nature; when the Balance was in danger to be overturned by the Hands that held it, which was at last very seasonably prevented by the late Revolution. However, as it is the Talent of human Nature to run from one Extream to another; so, in a very few Years we have made mighty Leaps from Prerogative Heights into the Depths of Popularity; and I doubt, to the very last degree that our Constitution will bear. It were to be wish'd, that the most August Assembly of the Commons would please to form a *Pandect* of their own Power and Privileges, to be confirmed by the entire Legislative Authority, and that in as solemn a manner (if they please) as the *Magna Charta*. But to fix one Foot of their Compass wherever they think fit, and extend the other to such terrible Lengths, without describing any Circumference at all, is to leave us and themselves in a very uncertain State, and in a sort of *Rotation*, that the Author of the *Oceana* never dreamt on. I believe the most hardy Tribune will not venture to affirm at present, that any just Fears of Encroachment are given us from the Regal Power or the *Few*: And, is it then impossible to err on the other side? How far must we proceed, or where shall we stop? *The Raging of the Sea,*
and

and *the Madness of the People* are put together in Holy Writ ; and 'tis God alone who can say to either, *Hitherto shalt thou pass, and no further.*

The Balance of Power in a limited State is of such absolute Necessity, that *Cromwell* himself, before he had perfectly confirmed his Tyranny, having some Occasions for the Appearance of a Parliament, was forced to creat and erect an entire new House of Lords (such as it was) for a Counterpoise to the Commons. And indeed, considering the vileness of the Clay, I have sometimes wonder'd, that no Tribune of that Age durst ever venture to ask the *Potter*, *What dost thou make?* But it was then about the last Act of a Popular Usurpation, and *Fate* or *Cromwell* had already prepared them for that of a single Person.

I have been often amazed at the rude, passionate and mistaken Results, which have at certain Times fallen from great Assemblies both Antient and Modern, and of other Countries as well as our own. This gave me the Opinion I mentioned a while ago, That publick Conventions are liable to all the Infirmities, Follies and Vices of private Men. To which, if there be any Exception, it must be of such Assemblies who act by *universal Concert, upon Publick Principles, and for Publick Ends*; such as proceed upon Debates without *unbecoming Warmths, or Influence from particular Leaders and Inflamers*; such, whose Members instead of *canvassing to procure Majorities for their private Opinions, are ready to comply with general sober Results, tho' contrary to their*

their own Sentiments. Whatever Assemblies act by these and other Methods of the like Nature, must be allowed to be exempt from several Imperfections to which particular Men are subjected. But I think the Source of most Mistakes and Miscarriages in Matters debated by Publick Assemblies, arises from the Influence of private Persons upon great Numbers; stiled in common Phrase, *Leading Men and Parties.* And therefore, when we sometimes meet a *few Words* put together, which is called the *Vote* or *Resolution* of an Assembly, and which we cannot possibly reconcile to *Prudence* or *Publick Good*, it is most charitable to conjecture, that such a Vote has been conceived, and born and bred in a private Brain, afterwards raised and supported by an obsequious Party, and then with usual Method confirmed by an *artificial* Majority. For, let us suppose five hundred Men, mixt in point of Sense and Honesty, as usually Assemblies are: And let us suppose these Men, proposing, debating, resolving, voting, according to the meer natural Motions of their own little or much Reason and Understanding; I do allow, that abundance of indigested and abortive, many pernicious and foolish Overtures would arise and float a few Minutes; but then they would die and disappear. Because, this must be said in behalf of Human kind, that common Sense and plain Reason, while Men are disengaged from acquired Opinions, will ever have some general Influence upon their Minds; whereas the species of Folly and Vice are infinite, and so different in every Individual, that they could never procure a Majority, if
other

other Corruption did not enter to pervert Mens Understandings, and misguide their Wills.

To describe how Parties are bred in an Assembly, would be a Work too difficult at present, and perhaps not altogether safe. *Periculosæ plenum opus æleæ.* Whether those who are Leaders, usually arrive at that Station more by a sort of Instinct, or secret Composition of their Nature, or Influence of the Stars, than by the Possession of any great Abilities, may be a Point of much Dispute. But when the Leader is once fixed, there will never fail to be Followers. And Man is apt to *imitate*, so much of the Nature of *Sheep*, (*Imitatores, servum Pecus*) that whoever is so bold to give the first *great Leap over the Heads of those about him*, (tho' he be the worst of the Flock) shall be quickly followed by the rest. Besides, when Parties are once formed, the Stragglers look so ridiculous, and become so insignificant, that they have no other way, but to run into the Herd, which at least will hide and protect them; and where to be much considered, requires only to be very violent.

But there is one Circumstance with Relation to Parties, which I take to be of all others most pernicious in a State; and I would be glad any Partisan would help me to a tolerable Reason, that because *Clodius* and *Curio* happen to agree with me in a few singular Notions, I must therefore blindly follow them in all: Or, to state it at best, that because *Bibulus* the *Party-man* is persuaded that *Clodius* and *Curio* do really propose the Good of their Country

try as their chief End; therefore *Bibulus* shall be wholly guided and governed by them, in the Means and Measures towards it. Is it enough for *Bibulus* and the rest of Herd to say without further examining, *I am of the side with Clodius, or I vote with Curio*? Are these proper Methods to form and make up what they think fit to call the *united Wisdom of the Nation*? Is it not possible, that upon some Occasions *Clodius* may be bold and insolent, born away by his Passion, malicious and revengeful; that *Curio* may be corrupt and expose to sale his Tongue or his Pen. I conceive it far below the Dignity both of Human Nature, and Human Reason, to be engaged in any Party, the most plausible soever, upon such servile Conditions.

This Influence of *One* upon *Many*, which seems to be as great in a People *Represented*, as it was of old in the Commons *Collective*, together with the Consequences it has had upon the Legislature; has given me frequent Occasion to reflect upon what *Diodorus* tells us of one *Charondas*, a Lawgiver to the *Sybarites*, an antient People of *Italy*; who was so avêrse to all Innovation, especially when it was to proceed from particular Persons: And I suppose, that he might put it out of the Power of Men fond of their own Notions, to disturb the Constitution at their Pleasures by advancing private Schemes; that he provided a Statute, that whoever proposed any Alteration to be made, should step out, and do it with a Rope about his Neck: If the Matter proposed, were generally approved, then it should pass into a Law; if it went in the Negative, the Proposer

poser to be immediately *hang'd*. Great Ministers may talk of what Projects they please ; but I am deceived, if a more effectual one could ever be found for *taking off* (as the present Phrase is) those hot, unquiet Spirits, who disturb Assemblies, and obstruct Publick Affairs, by gratifying their Pride, their Malice, their Ambition, or their Avarice.

Those who in a late Reign began the Distinction between the *Personal* and *Politick* Capacity, seem to have had Reason, if they judg'd of Princes by themselves ; for, I think, there is hardly to be found thro' all Nature, a greater Difference between two Things, than there is between a Representing Commoner in the Function of his Publick Calling, and the same Person, when he acts in the common Offices of Life. Here, he allows himself to be upon a Level with the rest of Mortals : Here, he follows his own Reason, and his own Way ; and rather affects a Singularity in his Actions and Thoughts, than servilely to copy either from the wisest of his Neighbours. In short, here his Folly, and his Wisdom, his Reason, and his Passions, are all of his own Growth, not the Eccho or Infusion of other Men. But when he is got near the Walls of his Assembly, he assumes and affects an entire Set of very different Airs ; he conceives himself a Being of a Superiour Nature to those *without*, and acting in a Sphere where the vulgar Methods for the Conduct of Human Life can be of no Use. He is list-ed in a Party where he neither knows the Temper, nor Designs, nor perhaps the Person of his Leader ; but whose Opinions he follows and maintains with

H a Zeal

a Zeal and Faith as violent, as a young Scholar does those of a Philosopher, whose Sect he is taught to profess. He has neither Opinions, nor Thoughts, nor Actions, nor Talk, that he can call his own, but all conveyed to him by his Leader, as Wind is thro' an Organ. The Nourishment he receives has been not only *chewed*, but *digested* before it comes into his Mouth. Thus instructed, he follows the *Party* right or wrong thro' all its Sentiments, and acquires a Courage and Stiffness of Opinion not at all congenial with him.

This encourages me to hope, that during this lucid Interval, the Members retired to their Homes, may suspend a while their *acquired Complexions*, and taught by the Calmness of the Scene and the Season; reassume the native sedateness of their Temper. If this should be so, it would be wise in them, as individual and private Mortals, to look back a little upon the Storms they have *raised*, as well as those they have *escaped*: To reflect, that they have been Authors of a new and wonderful Thing in *England*, which is, for a House of Commons to lose the universal Favour of the Numbers they represent. To observe, how those whom they thought fit to persecute for Righteousness sake, have been openly caress'd by the People; and to remember how themselves sat in fear of their Persons from popular Rage. Now, if they would know the Secret of all this unpresidented Proceeding in their Masters; they must not impute it to their Freedom in Debate, or declaring their Opinions; but for that unparliamentary Abuse of setting Individuals upon their Shoulders,

Shoulders, who were hated by God and Man! For, it seems, the Mass of the People, in such Conjunctions as this, have opened their Eyes, and will not endure to be governed by *Clodius* and *Curio* at the Head of their *Myrmidons*, tho' these be ever so numerous, and composed of their own Representatives.

This Aversion of the People to the late Proceedings of the Commons, is an Accident, that if it last a while, might be improved to good Uses for setting the Balance of Power a little more upon an Equality, than their late Measures seem to promise or admit. This Accident may be imputed to two Causes. The first, is an universal Fear and Apprehension of the Greatness and Power of *France*, whereof the People in general seem to be very much and justly possess'd, and therefore cannot but resent to see it in so critical a Juncture, wholly laid aside by their Ministers, the Commons. The other Cause, is a great Love and Sense of Gratitude in the People towards their present King, grounded upon a long Opinion and Sense of his Merit, as well as Concessions to all their reasonable Desires; so that it is for some time they have begun to say, and to fetch Instances where he has in many things been hardly used. How long these Humours may last, (for Passions are momentary, and especially those of a Multitude) or what Consequences they may produce, a little time may discover. But whenever it comes to pass, that a popular Assembly, free from such obstructions, and already possess'd of more Power, than an equal Ba-


lance will allow, shall continue to think they have not enough, but by cramping the Hand that holds the Balance, and by Impeachments or Dissensions with the Nobles, endeavour still for more; I cannot possibly see in the common course of things, how the same Causes can produce different Effects and Consequences among us, than they did in *Greece* and *Rome*.

There is one thing I must needs add, tho' I reckon it will appear to many as a very unreasonable Paradox. When the Act Passed some years ago against Bribing of Elections; I remember to have said upon occasion, to some Persons of both Houses, that we should be very much deceived in the Consequences of that Act: And upon some Discourse of the Conveniences of it, and the contrary (which will admit Reasoning enough) they seem'd to be of the same Opinion. It has appear'd since, that our Conjectures were right: For I think the late Parliament was the first-fruits of that Act; the Proceedings whereof, as well as of the present, have been such, as to make many Persons wish that things were upon the old Foot in that matter. Whether it be that so great a Reformation was too many Degrees beyond so corrupt an Age as this; or that according to the present turn and disposition of Men in our Nation, it were a less abuse to Bribe Elections, than leave them to the discretion of the Chusers. This at least was *Cato's* Opinion, when things in *Rome* were at a Crisis, much resembling ours; who is recorded to have gone about with great Industry, dealing Money among the People to favour

Pom-

Pompey (as I remember) upon a certain Election in opposition to *Cæsar*; And he excus'd himself in it upon the necessities of the occasion, and the corruptions of the People; an Action that might well have excus'd *Cicero's* censure of him, that he reason'd and acted, *tanquam in Republica Platonis, non in face Romuli*. However it be, 'tis certain that the Talents which qualifie a Man for the Service of his Country in Parliament, are very different from those which give him a dexterity at making his court to the People; and do not often meet in the same subject. Then for the moral part, the difference is inconsiderable; and whoever practices upon the Weakness and Vanity of the People, is guilty of an immoral action as much as if he did it upon their Avarice. Besides, the two Trees may be judged by their Fruits. The former produces a set of popular Men, fond of their own Merits and Abilities, their Opinions, and their Eloquence; whereas the bribing of Elections seems to be at worst, but an ill means of keeping things upon the old foot, by leaving the defence of our Properties, chiefly in the hands of those who will be the greatest sufferers, whenever they are endangered. It is easie to observe in the late and present Parliament, that several Boroughs and some Counties have been represented by Persons, who little thought to have ever had such hopes before: And how far this may proceed, when such a Way is lay'd open for the Exercise and Encouragement of popular Arts, one may best judge from the Consequences that the same Causes produced both in *Athens* and *Rome*. For, let Speculative Men Reason, or rather Refine as they please; it ever will be true among us,
that

that as long as men engage in the Publick Service upon private Ends, and whilst all Pretences to a Sincere *Roman* Love of our Country, are lookt upon as an Affectation, a Foppery, or a Disguise ; (which has been a good while our Case, and is likely to continue so ;) it will be safer to trust our Property and Constitution in the hands of such, who have pay'd for their Elections, than of those who have obtained them by servile Flatteries of the People.



FINIS.
